



NOVEMBER 2011 ISSUE

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"That's Life"

Sometimes people come into your life and you know right away that they were meant to be there....To serve some sort of purpose, teach you a lesson, or help you figure out who you are or who you want to become. You never know who these people may be, but when you lock eyes with them, you know that every moment they will affect your life in some profound way. And sometimes things happen to you at the time that may seem horrible, painful, and unfair, but in reflection you realize that without overcoming these obstacles you would never have realized your potential, strength, willpower, or heart. Everything happens for a reason. Nothing happens by chance or by means of good luck. Illness, injury, love, lost moments of true greatness and sheer stupidity, all occur to test the limits of your soul. Without these tests, life would be like a smoothly paved, straight, flat road to nowhere. The success and downfalls that you experience can create who you are, and the bad experiences can be learned from. In fact, they are probably the most poignant and important ones. If someone hurts you, betrays you, or breaks your heart, forgive them; because they have helped you learn about trust and the importance of being cautious of who you open your heart to. If someone loves you, love them back unconditionally, not only because they love you, but because they are teaching you to love and open your heart and eyes to little things. Make every day count. Appreciate every moment and take from it everything you possible can, for you may never be able to experience it again. Talk to people you have never talked to before, and actually listen. Let yourself fall in love, break free and set your sights high. Hold your head up, because you have every right to..... That's life.

By: Michael, Texas

Dating blues

Dear Black & Pink Family,

Hi! My name is Mandell aka Bliss-13 aka Lestat. I am a bi male. I've had trouble coming out, but once I put the gang life behind me, I have took who I am more serious. I was afraid of what my Mother would think of her Son, but once I told her, she greeted it with open arms and mind. I am who I am. I like women and very femme men. I'm really writing because I'm going through a twist with the person I'm involved with.

When we started talking I was in an open relationship with another queen, but quickly ended it so I could be with this person, who I'll call Ms. S. Once we started dating everything was good, we would spend all our time together in the yard, sit together at chow and have fun. Then we got placed on keeplock for 30 days for kissing. While locked down things were said by Ms S., and other people fed her lies, so once we got off of lock down and were able to see each other and talk, she broke off the relationship saying that she doesn't want to be tied down right now, but she wants to be with me when we go home. I on the the other hand, don't see or understand why we can't be together now to strengthen our relationship until we get home and get a place, etc... But I give her that respect and try not to push it or her away. I'm lost, and I don't feel the same as I did when we had the title of a couple. I'm feeling that some type of games are being played and I don't know what to do. I do love her, but I don't think she feels the same.

Thank you for reading this, I hope that I can get some kind of help from someone out there who has been through this or knows someone who went through it.

-Bliss-13, New York



Here's a happy daydream:)

“What Is This Feeling?”

What is this feeling
 That I feel so deep inside?
 What is this feeling
 That I try so hard to hide?
 What is this feeling
 That I can't seem to explain?
 What is this feeling
 That keeps driving me insane?
 This feeling that I have
 I can't just ignore
 This feeling that I have
 Keeps coming more and more
 This feeling that I have
 Won't leave me alone
 This feeling that I have
 Sometimes causes me to groan
 This feeling that I have
 Can only come from above
 What is this feeling,
 you may ask
 This feeling is called...
 Love

Nigel, Illinois



HOMER M.

“To My Sister”

It's a crazy world we live in today
 Where so many kids seem to lose their way
 Some don't get the love they need from home
 Some just feel depressed and all alone
 They don't hear “I love you” near enough
 I know on the inside it tears them up
 So always remember how much I love you
 That I'm always here for you to talk to

**I'm here no matter what
 the problem may be
 You will always mean the
 world to me!**

Angela, Texas

“Leave Me Alone”

I rather you leave me and never come back,
 That way I'll be free inside.
 I just can't accept the way you act,
 You've cheated on me and lied.

No doubt that's too much for me to bare,
 And you expect me to stay with you?
 Why should I? When you don't even care,
 Let alone be faithful and true.

So find you another man,
 Just leave me the hell alone.
 'Cause this shit you do I can't understand,
 It seem like you're always right and I'm wrong.

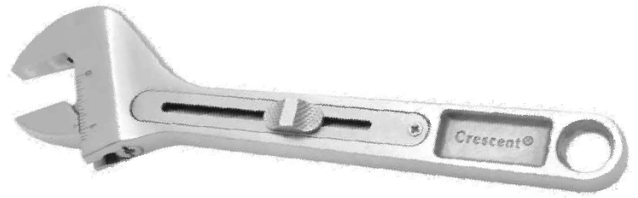
I refused to be played like a fool,
 I got to find someone new.
 Because you continue to test my cool
 I got to get rid of you.

I just can't endure this hurt and pain,
 My love and care is gone.
 In my eyes, you are not the same,
 So please just leave me alone.

E. Black, Florida



PIC is a machine



Dear Black & Pink,

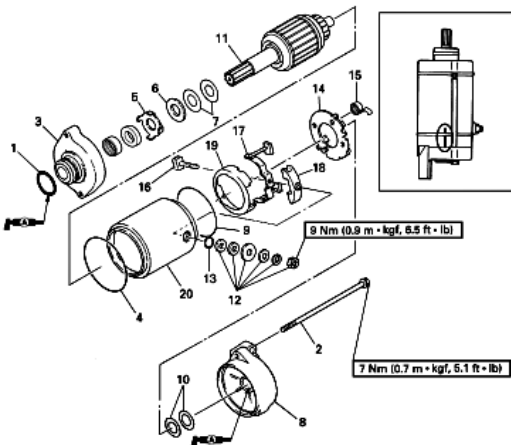
My name is Michael, AKA Miko to all my friends. I have a lot to say, but figured I would give a brief history of me. A little self indulgence, if you will. I am a 32 year old gay man who has been incarcerated for the last 10 years. I've just finished 10 years of a 10 to 20 and pray to be released on my minimum. I'm told not to hold my breath, although these days it seems that's all I do. I am in prison for almost killing one of our GLBT family members and if I could legally reach out to him and apologize I would do so; I can't. Mr. David, if you, by some cosmic coincidence, happen to be reading this, I am sorry for almost taking your life, and would give mine a trillion times over to go back and change that day. But I can't.

With that said, I am one of the lucky ones who had had the full, unconditional support of my family (Hi Mom) through my entire imprisonment. Others are not as fortunate, but I don't want to go off on prison prostitution yet. I'm currently being housed in the RHU or restricted housing unit. The Hole. When I try to inquire as to the reason, I am ignored. Originally it was for my "own protection." On July 3rd I filled out a form saying I had no enemies and did not fear for my safety. Nothin'. I see the Parole Board in October, and will have to be shackled and unshaven when I do. There is a 20 page backstory to that, but I will leave that out.

A funny thing as happened these last 90 days. We all walk around feeling like we are so self-aware, but get a little sensory deprivation in your life, and you will see just how superficially you have been living. You also get to look around and see how other people's psychosis manifests itself.

The truth is, a too-high percentage of people need mental help. The kind of help that isn't available anymore. Now people are just housed here. They have a block called SNU or special needs unit. It's nothing more than a farce. Another ploy from the PIC to gain funds from the state, government coffers. Those that won't fit on the SNU end up out on other blocks and end up in the long term RHU.

It's possible some people would benefit more from a good spanking and a hug. Instead, some people get short sentences and go home, and because they have lack resources, will violate parole and be right back. I know some counties have tried to implement Half Way Back programs, but there is no way to keep up with over-zealous parole agents (ex-cops and CO's) who will lock you back up for any minor thing. Here's the kicker, parole knows if they let out all the people serving 10 to 20, above, and most of all the lifers, we would never come back. In other words, the Prison Monster loses money.



My point in writing all of this is, in the last 90 days, in my time of deep thought, I realized the only way to put an end to the PIC is to treat it like any other machine. What's a machine but a whole made up of all it's smaller parts. We have to take it apart bit by bit. In this way, the task is not as daunting. I kept asking myself and my sisters, "How the eff can we help in this endeavour?" I still don't have the answer to that question, yet the mere fact that it has become a question across our collective lips is a start.

In the Aug 2011 issue of B&P, Patrice from Illinois had me in tears. The last paragraph hits the nail on the head. "Finally, I want to say this. Be true to yourselves. It may take courage you think you don't have- But trust me, you do!! There's no greater agony in life when one cannot accept nor embrace their truest self. There's nothing wrong with you!! You are exactly as you were meant to be. A

masterpiece of flawed perfection." They are the words that helped me all these years ago when I came out, and the mantra I live my life by. Thank you Patrice.

I want to thank B&P for being a platform for change and a voice for those who would otherwise not be heard. From the days of Stonewall to the still ongoing struggle of GLBTQ Civil Rights, we must never give up. As long as there is someone fighting for you, you owe it yourself to fight back, too. Don't be afraid!

I would like to say before I close that all of the LGBTQ here at Gayette Monster have all the fellas at Pelican Bay and the other 33 California prisons in our thoughts and prayers. I read through the Human Rights Coalition that the talks not only fell through, but they were lied to be officials. Who didn't know that would happen. They resume their strike on Monday Sept 26 and need all of our support.

Until Next Time,
Miko, Pennsylvania

You do have rights.

Dear Friends,

December 10, 2010

Hi, I am writing from the hole here at [name of prison withheld] in Oregon. I've been in the hold since June 14, 2010 for attempted escape. I am 47 years old with a release date of 2060, basically life without the possibility of parole, thanks to Oregon's mandatory minimum laws. Amazingly enough, staff here are surprised and upset at my attempt and have really been out to get me ever since. My first 4 ½ months here I never even received a disciplinary report. I was held instead solely at the request of the state police pending their investigation (which they have no authority to do.) What they were actually doing was trying to hold me in the hole indefinitely with no paperwork being filed by corrections staff because they knew once they filed the disciplinary report then they had to follow their own rules which would lead to my being released from the hole eventually.

I ended up writing to the Superintendent of the State Police telling him that if they continues this hold on me that I'd be filing a lawsuit for false imprisonment, among other things. The hold was dropped within 1 ½ weeks, but then the local District Attorney decided to get in on this game with the Department of Corrections and he placed the same hold on me pending his investigation. So wrote to him also telling him that I was contacting the ACLU so sue the State for violating my rights since he had no authority to hold me in the hole either. His hold was dropped about two weeks later and I finally received my disciplinary report and my hearings.

I received 180 days in the hole with time served, though once I leave here I go to Administrative Segregation for probably a year or so. Also, I got 42 days loss of Privileges and a fine/restitution of \$3500.00 which they knew was the only real way they could hurt me since I earn so little when I'm on the mainline as it is.

The point of my story is no matter what your situation may be or how bad it is, you do have rights. They do not end when you enter prison, but nobody is going to pay any attention to them unless you stand up for yourself and make them pay attention. Read your prison's rule books, read state and federal laws relating to prisoners. Sometimes it may not be easy but nothing worthwhile ever is. They say that knowledge is power and that's true but only if you use it. Stay strong.

-Rob, Oregon

Editor's Note: We found Rob's story from last year under a stack of mail, sorry for the delay. You'll be happy to know he is in a better unit now, likely due to the way he advocated for himself. Let's be strong together Rob!

**THIS
REVOLUTION
WILL NOT BE
PRIVATIZED**

OCCUPY TOGETHER
TO FIND EVENTS IN YOUR AREA VISIT WWW.OCCUPYTOGETHER.ORG

**YOU HAVE THE
RIGHT
TO REMAIN
SILENT
AND LET THEIR
MONEY
SPEAK FOR YOU**

(OR YOU CAN DEMAND TO BE HEARD)

OCCUPY TOGETHER
TO FIND EVENTS IN YOUR AREA VISIT WWW.OCCUPYTOGETHER.ORG

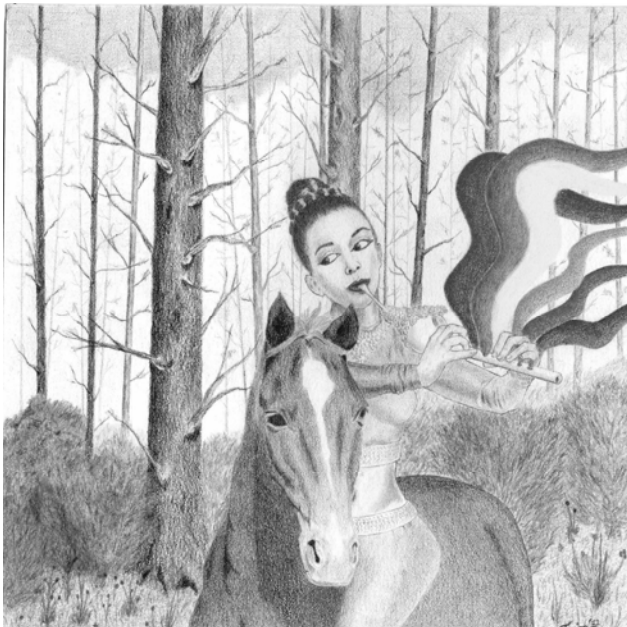
Black and Pink Artists Continue to Shine!



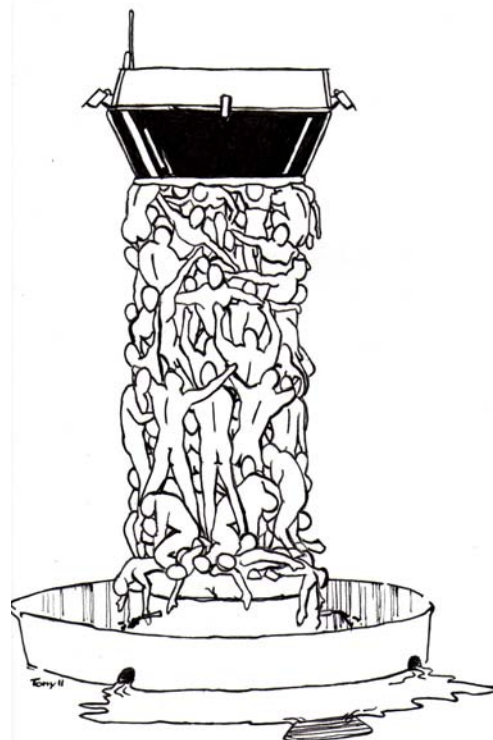
JOSH T.



ROBERT C.



TRAVIS C.



TONY B.

Black & Pink on Hate Crimes Legislation

Black & Pink sent this email to a group of organizations coordinating to promote the Trans = Rights Bill in MA.

To all of our LGBTQ and ally communities,

Monday 10/17/2011

It is with sadness that we, Black and Pink, are expressing our non-support for the Transgender Equal Rights Bill. We are making this statement public because we believe deeply and strongly in the need for protections for all members of our communities, especially transgender and gender non-conforming folks who are most directly targeted for violence. We absolutely believe in the right for all people to have access to discrimination-free housing and jobs. However, we do not believe that expanding Massachusetts' Hate Crimes statutes will bring greater safety to our communities, but rather gives greater strength to the criminal justice system that causes great harm to our communities.

We are not the first organization to express non-support for a bill such as this. In April of 2009, the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, Queens for Economic Justice, FIERCE, Peter Cicchino Youth Project, and the Audre Lorde Project in New York all expressed their non-support for a similar bill. You can read the entirety of their statement at <http://srp.org/genda>. The litany of Hate Crimes critiques is long, rather than go through them all we have attached a compilation of critiques following this short letter.

We would love to support an anti-discrimination bill that does not include a Hate Crimes inclusion. We would love to support and advocate for the full protection of all members of our communities who experience violence, including violence at the hands of the criminal justice system; from police harassment on the street to prison guard violence during incarceration. We are happy to engage in dialogue with other people and groups about how we have come to this conclusion.

It is with hope and a commitment to justice that we continue in our collective struggle for a world where we are all free from oppression.

With love and solidarity,

Black and Pink

-
- ♦ If a particular crime is deemed a hate crime by the state, the supposed perpetrator is automatically subject to a higher mandatory minimum sentence. For example, a crime that would carry a sentence of five years can be "enhanced" to eight years.
 - ♦ Trans people, people of color, and other marginalized groups are disproportionately incarcerated to an overwhelming degree. Trans and gender non-conforming people, particularly trans women of color, are regularly profiled and falsely arrested for doing nothing more than walking down the street.
 - ♦ Hate crime laws do not distinguish between oppressed groups and groups with social and institutional power.
 - ♦ Hate crime laws are an easy way for the government to act like it is on our communities' side while continuing to discriminate against us. Liberal politicians and institutions can claim "anti-oppression" legitimacy and win points with communities affected by prejudice, while simultaneously using "sentencing enhancement" to justify building more prisons to lock us up in.
 - ♦ Hate crimes laws focus on punishing the "perpetrator" and has no emphasis on providing support for the survivor or families and friends of those killed during an act of interpersonal hate violence.
 - ♦ Hate crime law sets up the State as protector, intending to deflect our attention from the violence it perpetrates, deploys, and sanctions. The government, its agents, and their institutions perpetuate systemic violence and set themselves up as the only avenue in which justice can be allocated; they will never be charged with hate crimes.
 - ♦ Hate crimes don't occur because there aren't enough laws against them, and hate crimes won't stop when those laws are in place. Hate crimes occur because, time and time again, our society demonstrates that certain people are worth less than others; that certain people are wrong, are perverse, are immoral in their very being.

OCCUPY BOSTON

WE ARE THE 99%. STAND UP! FIGHT BACK!



As of 10/21/11, OccupyTogether.Org reports that there are 1,594 occupations around the globe! What is happening in the city where you are? Do you relate to the messages? How can we best talk about prison abolition (besides the mock cell we're going to set up!!)? Reed answered some questions from a New England LGBT paper, the Rainbow Times:

How did you come to be a part of Occupy Boston?

Typically, I organize around specific campaigns; this is one of the first times that I've participated in a demonstration that recognizes the intersectionality of different forms of oppression and economic injustice inherently perpetuated by capitalism and corporatocracy. I hope that the Queer & Trans Caucus at Occupy Boston will be able to articulate the specific ways in which marginalized members of our LGBTQ family disproportionately experience the consequences of our current political-economic system. Like the organization Queers for Economic Justice based in NYC says: "We do this work because although poor queers have always been a part of both the gay rights and economic justice movements, they have been, and continue to be, largely invisible in both movements."

While many mainstream journalists have cited this as a nebulous, aimless movement, what has the spirit been like within the community?

The spirit is inspiring and refreshing. Everyone that I've met has been kind and thoughtful. Families with young children who regret they cannot sleep out there with us come by saying thank you and passing out home-made treats.

It's been exciting for me to get to introduce people from different parts of my life and activist communities to one another. For example, the other night at a general assembly, I looked around and saw a group of friends that I do prison abolition organizing with and got to introduce them to folks I had met at an immigrants rights vigil, and others I had met at a theatrical performance about labor rights! And let's be for real, there are cute people here too that I may have developed crushes on... I've been thinking about the song "Your Next Bold Move" where Ani DiFranco sings: "yes, the left wing was broken long ago / by the slingshot of cointelpro / and now it's so hard to have faith in / anything". Wings heal! Faith in the beauty of humanity can be restored!

Also, it's important to recognize that the mainstream media is not telling the full story. There have been many, many highly strategic, broad-based coalition actions here in Boston and in other "occupied" cities that have presented concise and well-framed sets of demands to specific targets. Those movements deserve attention and recognition; unfortunately, the media seems to be bored by them and often doesn't bother to send down a reporter, much less a TV camera. I think that the widespread frustration of everyday people who are finally getting the chance to have in-depth discussions with each other face to face is what makes this movement attractive to mainstream news.

Taking a step back--why are administrations feeling threatened by people *talking to each other in a park*? Because "the people united can never be defeated". As we resist being "divided and conquered", we grow stronger every day.

Do you feel as though, within the 99%, people of oppressed groups feel that they are an equal part, or is it something that needs to be negotiated/improved upon? Is the space LGBTQ accessible?

Last evening, the general assembly time was allocated to an incredible anti-oppression workshop, which for this round focused in on anti-racism work. Over 250 people attended and actively participated in the activities which were led by a diverse group of experienced volunteers (including Jason Lydon)! We talked about relative experiences of privilege and oppression and we distinguished ideological, institutional, interpersonal and internalized forms of oppression. 20% of the attendees identified as fabulously LGBTQ. I feel like the space is accessible to our community. There are also designated conflict-resolution mediators if trouble does arise, and other accountability processes can be put in place. We're actively trying to create a safer space for LGBTQ folks by educating people.

Fire & Smoke: Bo Brown and Prison Abolition, Part 3 of 5

Continued from October 2011 Issue: In addition to the prison movement, the early 1970s were a time when, as Brown describes, the world was going through “pre-revolutionary convulsions.”(17) The United States military had just been defeated by communist guerrilla forces in Vietnam. Across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, anti-colonial national liberation struggles were capturing the minds of millions. In the United States, ethnic liberation movements were being subverted and destroyed by state infiltration and violence. Some members of the Black Panther Party responded to the repression by going underground and targeting the police and corporate apparatus for attack.(18) The vanguard of the white student anti-war movement, Students for a Democratic Society, was split over the issue of revolutionary violence and the Weatherman faction also went underground to facilitate their attacks against the state and corporate structures.(19) There was a common theme espoused in radical and revolutionary minded organizations of the time that revolutionary “theory ain’t worth a shit if you ain’t got [the] practice” to back it up.(20) It was in this context that the George Jackson Brigade formed in Seattle.

The Brigade was comprised primarily of working class ex-prisoners and included a spectrum of genders, sexualities, and races.(21) This composition of people was key to both the Brigades formation as well as its functioning. The social and economic status of being unemployed or under-employed ex-convicts created a sense that mainstream society had little left to offer. Most Brigade members faced a reality that they could not return to a life of comfort and opportunity—that they could either “[eat] shit in a factory” or fight for something entirely new and liberatory.(22) This attitude is the natural result of an institution that seeks not only temporary incarceration, but permanent alienation through disenfranchisement, ineligibility in much of the job market, and reduction of a person’s basic humanity to that of “criminal.”(23) Mary Crow Dog describes how the same alienation of indigenous people led to the development of militancy in the American Indian Movement. The violence and harassment from both law enforcement and civilians gave many in AIM the idea that if they were going to be attacked anyway, they “should at least give them a good reason for it.”(24) Crow Dog believes Native Americans live in “that corner” where they can either be crushed by the weight of American society and the violence implicit in it, or fight back.(25) Prisoners and ex-prisoners also live in that same corner, and it is that corner that the George Jackson Brigade came roaring out of.

While the presence of ex-prisoners led to the formation of the Brigade, it was the presence of strong women that guided the Brigade’s functioning. Brown states that having “strong women in the mix” helped to not only keep machismo in check but also provided a force for critical self examination within the Brigade.(26) In September 1975, the George Jackson Brigade bombed a Safeway store in Seattle in to protest worker exploitation and price fixing, the capture of four members of the Sybianese Liberation Army, and in remembrance of a comrade who had blown himself up trying to bomb the same Safeway only days prior.(27) The store failed to evacuate people after receiving the bomb threat, and several people received minor injuries in the explosion. According to Brown, it was the women in the Brigade that demanded the Brigade publicly apologize for the botched action, one that was never intended to hurt anyone.(28) This spirit of self-criticism and accountability extended to all the Brigade’s endeavors, and was influenced in part by women who were not willing to subordinate the internal dynamics of the Brigade to its public actions. Women not only made up at least half the Brigade, but also provided at least half the leadership and participation. This is a testament to the Brigade’s emphasis on building a healthy and liberatory organization, capable of fighting the state.(29)

(17) Brown, interview. (18) Jalil Muntaqim “On the Black Liberation Army.” (Montreal: Solidarity, 1997) 3. (19) Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 49-50. (20) Brown, interview. Also Fred Hampton. (21) *The Power of the People*, 4. (22) Brown, interview. (23) Angela Y. Davis, *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture*. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005) 38. (24) Crow Dog, 65. (25) Crow Dog, 51. (26) Brown, interview. (27) “Creating a movement with teeth: the complete communiqu(c)s of the George Jackson Brigade” George Jackson Information Project http://www.gjbip.org/comm_teeth.htm [cited April 27 2007]. (28) Brown, interview. (29) *The Power of the People*, 4.

Newsletter Subscriptions (start or stop)

Newsletter Submissions

Request Free "Outside" Pen-Pal Ad Form

"Prisoner 2 Prisoner" Pen-Pal Listing
(for prisoners with full permission only)

Ideas for Black & Pink and Feedback

Request Erotica

Request Religious Support

Volunteer! (Send us thank you cards to
send to donors or stamps as a donation!)

Advocacy Request (Details about your situa-
tion, how a group of people making calls or
writing letters can help)

Black and Pink— Newsletter Subscriptions

Black and Pink— Newsletter Submissions

Black and Pink— Pen Pal

Black and Pink— P2P

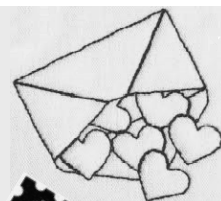
Black and Pink— Developing Leadership

Black and Pink— Erotica
****New September 2011****

Black and Pink— Religion
****New September 2011****

Black and Pink— Volunteer
****New October 2011****

Black and Pink— Advocacy
****New October 2011****



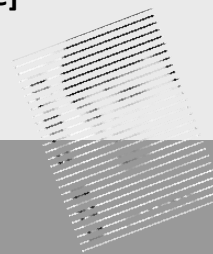
Write to B&P!

Black and Pink—[Insert Topic from Above]
c/o Community Church of Boston
565 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Write to B&P Art!

*****New Address as of January 2011!*****

Black & Pink Art c/o Reed Miller
200 Amory Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130



LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work."

Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to: **Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303**

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

